REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action.

In the Official Action, claims 1, 4-6, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by HAO et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,844,553). Claims 2-3, 7-12, and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over HAO in view of SEBASTIAN et al. (U.S. Patent No. Re. 36,602).

Upon entry of the amendment, claims 1, 2, 6, and 8-17 have been amended. Claims 1-17 are currently pending for consideration by the Examiner.

Claims 1, 4-6, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by HAO. Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a method that enables an initial contractor that receives a request to manufacture a sheet metal product from a customer to virtually examine the manufacturing work for the sheet metal product using the initial contractor's computer. Claim 1 explicitly recites that the initial contractor receives the request to manufacture the sheet metal product from the customer, and that the initial contractor's computer prompts the computer of an outsourcing service center to login to the initial contractor's computer and to assist the initial contractor in the planning of the manufacture of the sheet metal product. Claim 1 also recites that when the outsourcing service center's computer logs into the initial contractor's computer, that the outsourcing service center's computer assumes complete remote control over the initial contractor's computer. Claim 1 further recites that the outsourcing service center's computer operates the initial contractor's computer in a manner to assist the initial contractor in planning the manufacture of the sheet metal product.

The Official Action asserts that HAO discloses all of the features recited in claim 1. Contrary to this assertion, Applicants submit that HAO fails to disclose several features recited in claim 1. For instance, Applicants submit that HAO is directed to a method and apparatus for permitting real-time sharing of existing distributed applications among multiple workstations based on capturing and multicasting window input events, which is entirely different from the features recited in Applicants' claims. Applicants submit that HAO fails to provide any disclosure regarding the planning of the manufacture of a sheet metal product based upon a received request from a customer, which is explicitly recited throughout claim 1.

Additionally, Applicants submit that HAO fails to disclose an outsourcing service center computer logging into an initial contractor's computer and assuming complete remote control over the computer of the initial contractor. In contrast, Applicants submit that HAO merely discloses that multiple workstations each run local applications having at least one locally displayed window associated with the application, and that the user of one workstation can control which of the other workstations will receive a multicasted event in a window on their workstation displays, as described in the description associated with HAO's Figures 2 and 3A-3C. Applicants submit that HAO's multicasting from one workstation to a window of other workstations while those workstations are being operated by other users is distinctly different from Applicants' claimed outsourcing service center's computer assuming complete remote control over the initial contactor's computer.

Since HAO fails to disclose each and every feature of amended independent method claim 1, Applicants submit that HAO fails to anticipate claim 1 for at least the reasons discussed above. Applicants also submit that HAO fails to anticipate amended independent system claim 6, since claim 6 recites features similar to claim 1. Further, Applicants submit that claims 4-5

and 13, which depend either directly or indirectly on independent claim 1, are patentable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 1 and further for the additional features recited therein. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 4-6, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

Claims 2-3, 7-12, and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over HAO in view of SEBASTIAN. Applicants submit that SEBASTIAN fails to remedy the deficiencies of HAO discussed above with regard to independent claim 1, and thus, the combination of HAO and SEBASTIAN fails to disclose, teach, suggest, or render obvious the invention defined by dependent claims 2-3, 7-12, and 14-17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 2-3, 7-12, and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.
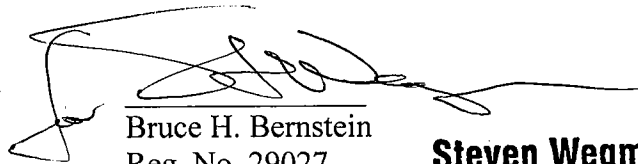
SUMMARY

From the amendments, arguments, and remarks provided above, Applicants submit that all of the pending claims in the present application are patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action is respectfully requested and an indication of allowance of claims 1-17 is now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants note that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
Yukio FUKUI et al.

Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29027

Steven Wegman
Reg. No. 31,438

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191